Rec'd Sep. 23d by post

J. Phillips' illness
Rise of Free Soil party

Boston, Mass. ~~A~~ Sept. 5. 1848.

My dear Mr. Estlin;

Being at home last week (as I still call Leicester, for my family is there) I had the pleasure of receiving a note from you - Bristol June 20. - accompanying the Translation of F. Douglass's Life. Please offer my sincere thanks to Miss Parkes for her kind remembrance of me, and for the little French volume which already I prize highly. I have been reading it with much pleasure, and my daughter (who was away from home when I received it, & who was 12 yrs. old yesterday, by the way,) is now anticipating much pleasure from reading it this winter. So far as I can judge - I am not a very practised French scholar - I think Miss P.'s translation an excellent one, & made with excellent judgment. The copy for Douglass (which I opened, as you gave me leave to do) is very elegantly bound, and will rejoice his eyes. It is not yet forwarded to him, but by this week's Liberator he will get notice of its being at our office. I could have sent it by Parcel Express, without much expense, but as the line hence to Rochester is not under the management of one and the same company, I feared that so small a packet might get lost; and in this case I judged immediate despatch was not absolutely necessary. I shall be looking out for an early & safe opportunity to send it.

You wished me to tell you what I shall pay on the parcel from you. It has come entirely without charge; and so you will have no guide for future parcels, which I believe is what you aimed at. It did not come in any of our 'Booksellers' parcels, as you expected it would, but in that of a Mr. Whipple a dealer in Artists' materials — colors, brushes, & stationery, &c. I called to pay him, but he said the proportion of the cost, of his entire parcel, which would fall on those sent to me, would be so small that he should be unwilling to assess it, and so I have still in my pocket your English Shilling which you were so thoughtful as to send to pay F. Douglass's parcel. You will have to write me how to appropriate it, in case I am at no expense in forwarding the parcel to Rochester, as I probably shall not be.

(Private; not so now) I must tell you — what has been a heavy cloud hanging over us for some days — that Wendell Phillips has been alarmingly ill, and still continues so, but this afternoon we hear that his symptoms are more favorable. He is at Lynn, 9 miles from Boston, where he has been for 2 months past.- He has not been very well all summer. The last week in Augt. he was severely attacked with what Dr. Reynolds of Boston (his attending physician, & who is also his brother in law - an experienced practitioner, say 55 yrs. of age) calls bilious diarrhoea. ~~It is learned that from a boy he has been subject to the piles, at times suffering severely; Dr. and these two difficulties have presented themselves together.~~ Dr. R. has also been apprehensive of Dysentery, which has been unusually prevalent and unusually fatal in this community, this Summer. We do not look upon him, by any means, as out of danger, and tremble at every new tidings. I could not tell, and cannot bear to think, what we should do if Wendell Phillips were to die. To me the loss would be greater than that of Garrison even, if I may speak of my individual grief and loss; I cannot estimate or compare the degree of loss to the cause. Even now, I can say, "God's will be done", and think I shall not repine, if he is taken from us, but I shall have to bow low, and trust to the wisdom of the appointment which now I cannot understand. Anne Weston, who was called from her home at Weymouth, 12 ms. from Boston in an opposite direction to Lynn, to go to Mrs. Phillips yesterday, & who staid with her till obliged to return home this afternoon, wished me not to give all these particulars to any English correspondents of mine, lest Mrs. Chapman or Miss Mary Chapman, a cousin of his, (both now in England) should hear of ~~this~~ it, and not from a direct communication, which Miss W. feared they would not be able to prepare in season f the Steamer of tomorrow morning. I must therefore beg you, my dear Sir, not to communicate these facts generally, though my own opinion is that these friends ought ~~not~~ to be immediately informed, from here, just what Mr. P.'s state is. You may rely upon early intelligence from me, if the issue of this sickness be, what we have dreaded to think of. Would it not be best that you should make no mention of this sickness for at least a week after receiving this? by which time, another Steamer will have arrived at Liverpool. Should you actually see Mrs. Chapman, or Caroline Weston, I should wish to leave it to your judgment entirely whether to communicate it, or not.

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I am not able to fix the precise time that I last wrote to you, having left my memorandum of letters, I believe, at Leicester; but I think it is not far from 2 months, when I answered yours of June 9th. We have had a busier Summer than, I believe, is common in this Antislavery warfare; during that season, our Lecturing agents have usually rested awhile; but not so, this summer; while the whole community is astir, in no small measure with reference to Slavery, its usurpations, its audacious claims, and its enormous Power, it has been no time for Abolitionists to be long idle at, or absent from, their posts. Last week our Agents at Harwich, Barnstable Co. (I did not happen to be at that Convention) were set upon by a ferocious mob, led on by Church members, who could not bear the exposures and rebukes, of which their different sectarian organizations were unsparingly made the objects, and it was with great difficulty that they were kept from serious injury. S. S. Foster had his clothing badly torn; W. W. Brown was taken up by two men, and hurled from the speakers' platform, over the side-railing, (the Convention was held in a Grove, & several thousand people were in attendance) — the yells, & oaths, have been described as frightful & hideous beyond what our Agents have ever heard before, and that is a bold word, for Foster & Pillsbury have looked on many a fearful scene where the mob-law (la loi de Lynch, as Miss P. translates it) had undisputed sway. They were protected in this instance by a strong, stalwart body of men, but the meeting was entirely broken up, and of the *platform* no two pieces were left together. So you see the spirit of pro-slavery and of mob-ism has by no means been exorcised from old Massachusetts – the most civilized, upon the whole, of any American State. We are just about entering upon our Fall Campaign, and with renewed vigour. Our agents will go into the States of Maine, New Hampshire & Rhode Island, as well as Mass., under authority from the New England Yearly Convention. And as the Presidential Election comes on the 7th of November, and the different Parties are waxing every week hotter & fiercer, I look forward to pretty warm & arduous work for the 2 coming months. There is, as you are aware from our Anti Slavery papers, a *new* *Party* in the field, called the Free Soil Party. Their cardinal principle is *No-Extension of Slavery into new Territory*. On this, they are at issue with all the Slave States, and with their miserable tools, still numerous though manifestly decreasing, at the North; and among whom, Daniel Webster of this State stands conspicuous. I said *all the Slave States* – I ought to do them the justice to say that a very considerable number of men in these States – chiefly the more Northern of them, but appearing even in Mississippi — sympathise warmly with this No-Extension Cry, and stand ready — (such is the testimony of Southern men) — to go even for the entire Abolition of Slavery. It will not be long, I think, before these become the controlling power in Maryland, Virginia, & Kentucky. Delaware is pretty nearly *Abolitionised* now; an Anti-Slavery paper, outspoken too, is freely published there; so also one, which is little more than a Free-Soil paper, I believe, in No. Western Virginia, — called The Crisis. — This Free Soil party has put in nomination, for the Presidency, Martin Van Buren, of New York, once Presdt. for 4 years — 1837 – 1841, — but rejected from a nomination for a 2d term, by the command of the South, because he opposed the Annexation of Texas. Mr. Van Buren will receive unquestionably a very large Vote, — very many of his old political opponents will now go for him, having got their eyes well open to the utter profligacy and pro-slavery meanness of their party; the so-called "Whig". The Democratic party, for a long series of years, has not pretended to be anything else than the Slaveholders' jackal. I think it most probable that an election, *by the people*, will be prevented.

In my last, I remember, I told you of the sudden & painful death of my wife's father. It has been a most heavy affliction to us all, but particularly to my wife, to whom it still comes as a fresh grief. She remains very quietly at Leicester.

How complete seems the submission of Ireland, and how general the awe of the superior military force of the Government. A crazy scheme, most will call that of O'Brien & his Confederates, now that it has so emphatically failed; and it could hardly have failed so suddenly & utterly, if it had not been a crazy scheme, ill-arranged & wholly immature. It is quite an interesting question here, what will be done with O'Brien, Meagher, & others; and a general hope expressed, on account of all the many bearings & relations of the thing, that your Government will not proceed to extremities with them, — but rather be lenient.

Do you see the "Massachusetts Quarterly Review" — or hear of it? The no. for September has an admirable sketch of Dr. Channing's Life & Character by Theodore Parker. The Review is edited by him, R. Waldo Emerson, & a young Mr. Cabot. The Chr. Examiner also has an article on Dr. C., by W. H. Furness of Phil.a — which I have not yet read.

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Wednesday A.M. Sept. 6.

It is not easy for me to understand the present condition of France, nor what may probably ensue there. I cling strongly to my confidence in LaMartine's integrity. Have you seen any evidence, that satisfied you, that he had any participation in the late insurrectionary movements, or in the profligate courses of some of his associates in the late Provisional Government? Is Cavaignac - for I can get hold of nothing which shows his past history - equal to maintaining the post he holds? If so, he is a wonderful man, & should have greatly distinguished himself before this, I think.

We hear that Mrs. Chapman, sisters, & children had a quick & pleasant voyage - 18 days from N. York to Liverpool, by Ship Joshua Bates - and that they proposed only a very short stop in England, but were to go speedily to Paris, the place of their destination, & where I learn she expects to pass 2 or 3 years, making the education of her 3 children her leading object. If their stay in England has been so brief, you will probably not have seen - possibly not even have heard of ~~of~~ them.

~~I have been, from week to week, thinking it probable that Mr. [illegible] would soon arrive here, but as yet have heard nothing of him~~: Mr. Hincks has very lately been in Montreal, &

was soon to be in Boston. I have heard nothing of his movements for some months.

As I believe I told you, I seldom see the "Inquirer" now, having discontinued taking it. If any article of special interest to our cause, or to us on this side of the water, should appear in ~~its~~ it at any ~~from~~ time, if you will give me an intimation thereof, I will endeavour to get sight of the numbers in which they may appear.

We hear from Wendell Phillips this morning - in a very general way only - that he remains much the same that he has done for the past 2 days - apparently neither better nor worse. - I hope your own health has been good this summer: I am looking, by every Steamer, for a letter from you in reply to mine of July -, & hope to get very good accounts of you all.

Please give my respects to your daughter, in whose health & welfare we feel much interest, and to all my Bristol friends. It seems unusually long since I have heard from any of them; I suppose they may be somewhat scattered from their several homes during the Summer season.

The "Free soils" men of this State hold a great Convention today, in this City, to nominate State officers, & to prepare for the November elections. John Van Buren, son of the Ex-President, is to be present.

I have hardly spoken of Mr. Garrison. He has now been some 2 months at a Water Cure Establishment at Northampton, 100 ms. west from Boston, and we hear that he is making good progress. From a great dread (which he thought would be unconquerable) of cold water baths & applications, I am told he has come to enjoy them. We shall not get him back again for 2 months at the very least.

The hour is at hand for the Steamer's departure, and I must close. With sincere respect,
Yours
Saml. May Jr.

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